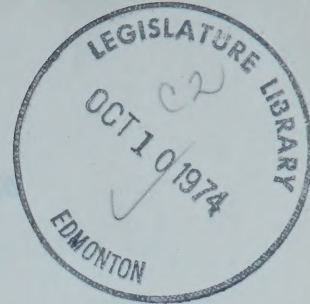


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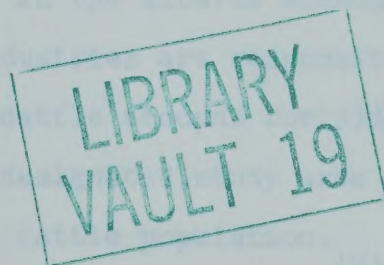
WESTERN STOCK GROWERS' ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION
TO THE

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON LAND USE AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

IN THE EASTERN SLOPES

[Commercial proposals for tourism and recreation:
general] #2

CALGARY, JUNE 18, 1973.



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W.S.G.A. SUBMISSION TO THE PUBLIC HEARINGS ON
LAND USE AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE
EASTERN SLOPES - CALGARY - JUNE 18

INTRODUCTION:

The Western Stock Growers' Association believes when considering land use of the Eastern Slopes that the first consideration must be the ecology of the area. Second consideration is the necessity and the importance of agriculture to Alberta. The Association believes that these are the first priorities and that other alternative land uses be considered as their respective priorities require.

The protection and management of the ecology will provide an adequate source of clean water. The Association believes that there can be multiple use of the resources and still maintain the environment and the water shed of the Eastern Slopes.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE:

The absence of agriculture in the discussion of many reports is of major concern. Agriculture has a major role in the Alberta economy; the agricultural industry and it's supporting industries are responsible for 65% of the total Alberta economy. Beef cattle account for 33% of the total agricultural gross receipts. The designated study area of the Eastern Slopes includes 23% of Alberta's cattle population. (2)

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- (1) A voluntary membership organization representing the voice of Alberta cattlemen.
 - (2) Cattle population of the local governments included in the study area expressed as percentage of province.

The per capita consumption of beef has risen to 92.5 lbs. and is predicted to rise higher. The following table predicts the required expansion in the cattle industry if it is to meet the demand for beef due to increased consumption and population growth.

PROJECTED BEEF REQUIREMENTS BY 1980

<u>Per Capita Consumption</u>	<u>Population</u>	
	25 million	27 million
100 lbs.	+ 21%	+ 37%
110 lbs.	+ 39%	+ 51%

Source - Planning For Profit - National Beef Seminar - Calgary.

If Canada is required to increase beef production by 50% to meet the demand, it is of particular concern to Alberta because 75% of our beef production is exported out of Alberta, mainly to Eastern Canada. The value of the shipment of the produce from the meat processing industry in Alberta was 393 million dollars compared to only 175 million dollars from the petroleum industry.

(3)

COMPETITION FOR LAND:

The pressure of urban sprawl is in direct competition for available space in the production of food. The following table indicates the rate that the City of Calgary is taking land out of production for residential areas.

AREA OF LAND DEVELOPED UNDER REGISTERED RESIDENTIAL PLAN - CALGARY

<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
1968	952
1969	1111
1970	946
1971	1169
1972	1426

Source - Calgary Planning Department.

The above table does not include land used for industrial and commercial development.

There is a tremendous acreage of land being taken out of production in the areas surrounding urban centres. For example, the two municipal districts of Rockyview and Foothills surrounding Calgary have estimated that 40,000 acres of farm and ranch land was sub-divided and removed from agriculture in 1972. We believe this figure to be conservative.

(4)

To meet the demand for food, coupled with the pressures of urban sprawl and recreation, we can not restrict the input factor of grazing Crown areas in the Eastern Slopes.

LAND CONTROL:

The population growth demands increasing awareness of the recreational needs of society. As the recreational needs grow and overflow the urban facilities into the rural areas, with no rules of development to follow, there develops a direct conflict between the recreationalist and the agricultural producer.

(4) Calgary Herald - February 24, 1973.

In our experience we have found owners and operators of private land and lease land do not have effective protection of their rights to the land against trespass. The rancher has neither the effective legal authority nor the time to regulate the recreational use of his land. The current flood of people, especially during the hunting season, creates a very real nuisance to the land user.

When a producer is assigned a lease he accepts the responsibility of managing that parcel of land on behalf of government. The lessee must manage it within a set of guidelines set down by the government. The lessee buys the right to lease and manage this land. He is responsible for any damages and/or abuses that occurs to the land under his control, whether they be due to his inadequacy or some one elses. The lessee must have the power to control access if he is expected to uphold his responsibility of caring for the lease and provide a habitat for game.

The lessee pays an assignment fee for the use of the lease. He also annually pays the taxes and royalty plus all other operating costs of maintaining this renewable resource. There is no better conservationist of the land than the user. If the lessee is to improve the level of management and protection as he has in the past he must have control of who is on his land under his jurisdiction and be aware of what they are doing.

The Land and Grazing Division of the Alberta Government had an income account of 2.4 million.

(5)

In our experience we have found owners and operators of private land and lease land do not have effective protection of their rights in the land against trespass. The rancher has neither the effective legal authority nor the time to regulate the recreational use of his land. The current flood of people, especially during the hunting season, creates a very real nuisance to the land user.

When a province is assigned a lease he assumes the responsibility of managing that parcel of land on behalf of government. The lessee must manage it within a set of guidelines set down by the government. The lessee buys the right to lease and manage this land. He is responsible for any damages and/or abuses that occur to the land under his control whether they be to the land, the wildlife, or the people. The lessee must have the power to enforce the law to uphold his responsibility of management. The lessee pays an assignment fee for the use of the lease. He also annually pays the taxes and royalty plus all other operating costs of maintaining this renewable resource. There is no better conservation of the land than this. If the lessee is to improve the level of management and protection of the land he must have control of who is on his land under his jurisdiction and be aware of what they are doing.

The Land and Grazing Division of the Alberta Government had an income account of 2.1 million.

(2)

PRESERVATION OF RESOURCES:

Experience by members of the W.S.G.A. has shown that the best manager of the renewable resource of land and grazing is the man whose living depends upon it. He has to be if he wants to survive. Through proper management the grass cover in much of the Eastern Slopes has been improved. The Dry Cottonwood Forest Allotment, through proper management, increased the stocking rate from 1820 A.U.M. (animal units months) to 2500 A.U.M. If the climate is right to give security of tenure, management will ⁽⁶⁾conserve the environment while insecurity of tenure often causes a temptation to exploit the resource because you may not have it for long.

To preserve the water shed of the Eastern Slopes, there must remain a protective covering over the soil. One of the most serious threats to this cover is fire. Controlled grazing of livestock will reduce the fire potential. The reduction of this potential becomes more essential as the number of people using the area increases. The Association would like to point out that the volunteer fire fighters of an area are initially the agricultural users of the land.

Another threat to eroding the protective cover away is motorized recreational vehicles. They try climbing steep inclines, spinning their wheels, loosening the soil and making a rut so rain will wash it away. It leaves a trail that others will follow and it soon becomes a beaten track.

(6) Bob Ross - State Range Conservationists, Soil Conservation Society, Bozeman, Montana.

Isolated instances are found and used to represent the average where poor management allows damage to the surface environment along stream banks. Advocates of fencing stream banks are only aggravating the problem. It will concentrate livestock to the areas of limited access to water. These isolated instances are very limited and can be quickly and easily identified thus the person responsible can be easily contacted and corrective management practices initiated.

COMPATIBLE USES OF LAND:

The Association believes that domestic livestock and wildlife are compatible in the same area. Wildlife graze on different plant species than cattle. Livestock will utilize the soft grass of the valley floors leaving the high land of hard grass, which blows clear of snow during the winter, for wild game to graze on. The grazing of livestock can be effectively managed to protect the environment and utilize the resources while wildlife can not.

Studies conducted in Central Europe found that livestock grazing is essential in keeping the streams and water supplies clean and preserving the natural beauty of the countryside.

(7)

(7) "Size and Allocation of Areas No Longer Used for Agriculture",
Dr. H. Wachorst, Dept. of Agriculture, West Germany.

"A Problem In Range Management",
Dr. W. Kolt, Dept. of Environment, West Germany.

"Economical Aspects of Alternative Use of Marginal Land",
Dr. E. Neander, Institute of Agricultural Economics, West Germany.

"The Utilization of Marginal Land for Livestock Production,
Particularly in the Mountain Areas of Central Europe",
W. E. Oir, West Germany.

There is often a conflict in the results of many studies about land use of the Eastern Slopes due to the professional training of the surveyor. Much of the work done in the Eastern Slopes has been done by forestry oriented people, who are qualified for looking at forest potential but not for agriculture. The resulting conclusion is that much of the land may be better suited for grass than forestry.

The duties and rights of the land user or renter must be recognized. The public must also recognize their duties and rights in preserving the environment.

Recreation on our rural land; deeded, leased, or rented, is considered a "right" by many rather than the privilege it is. Recreation in the Foothills is currently being subsidized by other users; agricultural use and resource development pay taxes, rentals, grazing fees, rights of entry, etc., while the extensive recreationalist uses it at no cost to himself.

SUMMARY:

In summary, the Western Stock Growers' Association believes the following priorities can be developed:

- (1) Agricultural use be a high priority in establishing land use of the Eastern Slopes. The demand for food is increasing the same as the demand for recreation.
- (2) Leave the say in land classification and use as much as possible within the hands of the people whose living depends upon it.. They know the land, the topography, the climate, and the uses of it better than anyone else. They use it as a renewable resource if they are to survive.
- (3) Foster the use of all land for limited recreational use allowing democracy to function and the individual preference as to what recreation he feels he can cater to.

- (4) The development of population corridors for intensive recreational facilities - commercial development.
- (5) Areas between the intensive recreation areas be left for extensive recreation with very limited motorized access and under the control of the land user.
- (6) Encourage urban areas to develop parks and to restore and maintain natural areas within their boundaries.

